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outta control

News & Views of the Belfast Anarchist Collective

OUTTA CONTROL ... of the state, bosses, patriarchy, schooling, churches .... As Anarchists we oppose the authority and exploitation of this society, and advocate one of FREE association and self-management. This paper comes out every 3-4 weeks and we welcome contributions, criticisms etc.

THE ULTIMATE PROTEST

The months which end 1980 and begin '81 will see a heightening of political conflict. After over 4 years 'on the blanket', and the last 2½ of these on the no-wash protest, a no. of men are to begin a hunger strike on Oct. 27th — unless there is a dramatic change of circumstances before then.

The whole nature of Britains repressive policies here are being challenged. This is the attempt at 'criminalisation' — by introducing sham courts, which have no juries, hearsay evidence and a reversal of the standard practice of 'innocent till proven guilty'; by refining legislation which allows for 3 and 7 day detentions before charging; by creating specialised centres for torturous interrogations; and by withdrawing of 'political status', and systematically beating and degrading those prisoners who protest. Thus the British government has attempted to demoralise opposition and internationally portray that opposition as criminal. It has claimed that the days of internment, Special Poweres Act, torture and a crude sectarian police force are over.

'MURDER IS MURDER'?

Let us suppose that some people, who did kill, were caught in the dragnet of the 'conveyor belt' system. Three points should be made here.

Firstly, some of these are accused od killing members of the security forces who are not only responsible for individual acts of terror, but systematically repress any opposition to the blatant sectarian and reactionary nature of the state.

Secondly, others of these are accused of bombings which have inflicted fatalities and injuries on civilians, such as at Oxford St. (when the bombers naively believed the RUC would pass on the phoned warning) and more recently at Le Mon when lethal fire bombs killed many. But does the NIO believe that the Diplock system of torture, imprisonment and degradation will cure the dangerous irresponsibility, or more importantly remove the injustices which motivated these people.

Thirdly, the security forces record of murder and terrorism (Majella O Hare, Brian Maguire, John Boyle, Michael Mc Cartan, to name a few victims) has resulted in not one conviction or imprisonment among the 'peace - keepers'.

We all know the hypocracy of the British and Unionist governments. And the propaganda of 'catching the terrorists' should not delude us as to the real nature of the Diplock Courts and the prisons. It is to put out of circulation those who would challange, in any way, the right of the government to discriminate, to impoverish, to repress, and to shoot down if need be in order to preserve its power. If alas they cannot be framed and imprisoned, then shoot the croppies.

LOYALIST REACTION

Is the strike part of a Provo conspiracy to bring in Rome Rule; or does its reasons lie in the setup of the state itself and in the prison regime.

There are about 10 loyalist blanket men. There were 100 but outside support dwindled and most became disspirited. But at first they too must

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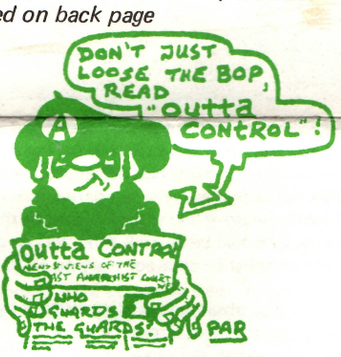


SANITATION FOR THE NATION

Mr. Drug-Squad McBride has been given a lot of press coverage recently...."magic mushrooms can kill"...."there have been deaths in England"...."it's as dangerous as heroin"'...."if you see anyone picking them please let us know..."etc. The D.S. remedy...its bad, dangerous, please inform us.

But as more and more people try them out for themselves, the D.S. nonsense is seen all so well. Magic mushrooms are not "poisonous": that's just a catch-all phrase for something neither tried nor understood. (even most recent books on fungi - rather than admit their lack of research and experimentation, label them as poisonous and thus to be avoided). It's the scientific establishment (and the police) who are the least equipped to realise and recognise the potential of hallucinogenic drugs....each in their seperate ways try to stifle that which threatens THEIR dogma, that which upsets or contradicts THEIR way of looking at things; cause that's all that hallucinogenic mushrooms are—a vehicle for a new look at the world and ourselves. We may not like all we see or feel, but invariably the experience will teach us something new, a new way of looking at the madness around us and within us.

The most common hallucinogenic mushroom (which grows in most parks and golf courses around Belfast) is Psilocybin, the "flesh of the gods"...sacred in some cultures, just recently rediscovered in ours. It's more than possible that the fly agaric, another hallucinogenic mushroom, less common than psilocybin, but available in Ireland none the less - was used by druids and other hallucinogenic plants, generally regarded as poisonous were used by medieval witches or wise-women, which amonst other things gave them the real/illusion of flying. (The male church wiped them out but that's another story).

While the DS spread horror stories and ask for touts, the picking of mushrooms and the eating of them is NOT an offence....something which they are trying to change. Forerunners in this field are the Liverpool DS who are currently defending a case in the appeal court that the crushing of dried psilocybin, is a preparation of the controlled drug psilocin. What rubbish— but they are trying to confirm by law that crushing, boiling or preserving of psilocybin in honey is a preparation of the class A drug psilocin, and as such, illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971).

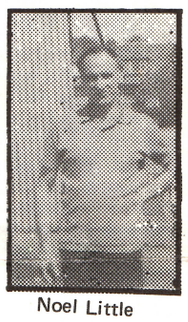
A good defence — always plead NOT GUILTY and sign no statement — is that such a preparation would involve a complex chemical process requiring laboratory equipment and an advanced knowledge of science - the mere crushing is NOT such a chemical preparation. If in doubt phone Release 01-603 8654 or us at 25426. Psilocybin mushrooms do not kill...the lethal dose is beyond what our stomach can hold, though too many could mess up your head, so caution is obviously needed. Contrary to what we are told, there have NOT been any deaths in England due to psilocybin mushroom eating, though extreme care is needed to ensure that the right mushroom is being picked. Such information becomes freely available when it is passed on throughout our culture, from people to people: by trying to stifle and hide that which is freely available, the DS are contributing to our ignorance, to a lack of knowledge. That is when the dangers arise!!

To say mushrooms are as dangerous as heroin is utter tripe; heroin is a synthetic chemical, reknown for its physical and psycological addiction.....psilocybin mushrooms grow organically and are not addictive in either sense: heroin is a black-market commodity based on increasing and huge sums of money; mushrooms grow freely and are there for all who want them, to pick; heroin for a variety of reasons, KILLS;

continued inside

IRSP COUPLE SHOT

In the early hours of Wed. Oct. 15th, Noel Little and Ronnie Bunting, both members of the IRSP, were assassinated. Suzanne, Ronnie's wife, was critically injured. The attack has all the hallmarks of a British Army murder squad.



Noel Little

Noel had just been released from RUC custody, where he had refused to say anything and though from Short Strand, had gone to stay at the Buntings

After breaking in through the front door (which had 5 locks) the attackers shot Ronnie and Suzanne at the top of the stairs, and went to the boxroom, where Noel was shot. They must have known where Noel was.

All three were active in their support for the H-Block and Armagh protesting prisoners. Noel especially worked incessantly for the Relatives Action Committee, and was a member of the Smash H-Block Committee (another of whose members - Miriam Daly - was also murdered last summer). Noel and Miriam will also be remembered for their part in the Murray Defence Campaign when that group opposed the threatened hanging of 2 anarchists from the south.

We salute Noel and Ronnie and will help continue the work they undertook. We hope that Suzanne will recover quickly.

WHO'S CULTURE?

Culture, now more than ever with the advent of mass communication, reflect and reinforces the values and position of the ruling elite. They see culture as a means of mystifying our role as the oppressed, and keep us in our place.

The Arts Councils, North and South, even at a time of depression have been given more money than ever. At about £3million annually or £1 per head of population, the Republic's rate of subsidy to the arts is now comparable to Britains. Six years ago the Arts Councils budget was a mere £100,000.

COUNTER-CULTURE

However there is also a 'resistance' culture which attacks the whole basis of control in our society. People against all pressures write plays with a political message aimed against the establishment and bourgeois conditioning. Ironically the middle class sometimes allow these type of plays to be shown and actually applaud them, and say to us, look how liberal we are. However set against the backdrop of the hundreds of their plays which are shit, constantly putting us down, and combined with the fact that few of us are prepared to mingle with these middle class farts, much of the impact of an important play is diffused.

Such a play was staged at the Lyric in Belfast.

BENT BUT NOT BROKEN

Bent is set in Nazi Germany: its theme is the persecution of homosexuals, left-wingers and Jews during the Hitler regime; In the circimstances of the internment camp, reeking of grossness and the extreme of human depravity and brutality, love is not only present but prevails, and Max, the central character, a dilettante and idle sophisticate, is enabled through the conditions of the camp and the relationship with Horst, another homosexual, to discover the capacity for love and resistance.

OFF STAGE

In the Foyer of the Lyric were historical notes about the development of sexual politics during Germany at that period and photos of the notorious Dauchau concentration camp where part of the play takes place. It had obvious parallels with N. Ireland. Homosexuality is still illegal here. People are still being jailed for their homosexuality and political beliefs. The latter are thrown in prisons by way of the Diplock Courts and some end up in the concentration camps of Long Kesh and Armagh, run by the same type of people as in Dauchau who 'just obey orders'

No doubt, too close to reality for the Lyric bozoos who ritually go to the place consuming one play after another, not distinguishing between them and without making a blind bit of difference to them.

OUT OF THE CULTURAL GHETTO

It would be great if plays like Bent toured working class areas. Instead we are subject to the various 'Community' theatre groups who come and go, putting on irrelevant plays sidestepping political issues lest they are seen as sectarian or offend anyone which might lead to their 'all important' grants being cut.

If you get a chance to see Bent, do so.

TRANSLATIONS

The new play Translations by Brian Friel was written, at this politically delicate time, not to offend anyone. Least of all the Arts Councils, North and South and the Derry City Council, who altogether backed this one play to the tune of £70,000 and you don't get any money like that to rock any boats. The theme of the play had the potential to be politically hard hitting but dealt on a very superficial level. A good indication of the level was when at the Derry premiere a Unionist councillor lead the audience in the encore applause. The play could have articulated, highlighted and pinpointed cultural imperialism at its immergence but instead we are given a vehicle for Friels 'Shakesperian' oratory. The actors, mostly from Ireland should have concentrated a bit more on the content than their 'all-important' form.

RUC GUILTY!

Two months after the shooting of the Lower Ormeau road boy, Michael Mc Cartan (aged 16), a tribunial of inquiry was organised. A panel of well-known figures, who are active in civil liberties work, heard the evidence—from both Michael's friends who had been with him, and neighbours. It was established that contrary to RUC claims

Michael was observed painting slogans by an RUC Special Patrol Group in an unmarked van 100 yards away, the same patrol did not shout a warning before shooting, the area was well lit with street lighting and there was no trouble in the area on that night, especially no shooting as the RUC claimed.

That the Friends of Michael McCartan resorted to a marquee tent for the Tribunal reveals the lack of local facilities. In fact the Catholic Church owns a hall, a nursery school and a youth club in the area. Dennis Newberry, the priest, refused permission for these to be used, as well as declining to even reply to the Friends who had asked him to sit on the panel. Incidentally he had banned Michael from the youth club.

About 200 people turned out for the Tribunal and apart from the immediate evidence, a general picture of the area was drawn—the inadequate social facilities, neglected housing maintenance and the vulnerablility to loyalist sectarian attacks—2 people were shot dead earlier this year.

The problem of such a Tribunal however is that power is taken out of the local people's hands and placed in those of the experts—the articulate and the professional. When at the end of the session, there was an attempt to find out what could be done most people clutched at the vague suggestion of an independent public investigation without the RUC—but with Atkins organising it, this tribunal was the nearest thing.

The surest way to stop the RUC repeating this murder, short of keeping the bastards out, is to refuse any form of co-operation—including not allowing them to take our children to sports activities.

CRASS!

The Crass have had quite some impact lately- their latest album has sold some 50,-000 copies without any musical press hyping, despite the rantings of the predictable music press, telling us that we shouldn't like them, that they'll go out of fashion like the Clash, T.R.B. etc. Anyone who reads the lyrics, listens to the music, looks at the International Anthem should be able to realise that they go a lot futher than just sloganeering.

The Crass Collective doesn't just comprise of the group - equally important are the film unit, the magazine publishing, the spray painting of tube-stations etc., they comprise of quite a lot of people living communally. They pursue different projects, doing benefits for various causes (an Anarchist centre in London for example) and spreading the message.

The words of the records etc., reject opportunistic leadership, saying that people should believe in themselves rather that delegating their responsibilities to others, the easy way out. A disappointing development has been the small army of punks rallying under the Crass banner, projecting them as another form of leadership. Punk was born out of living day to day on the dole, in a music industry pushing glam rock and bloated superstars, bearing no relevance to their own lives, feeding of the millions. Punk was a reaction against that. It was something young people could call their own, to bind themselves together. Eventually punk was bastardised and pulp itated by sell-outs, ripp-offs, people in for a quick profit. Someone is always feeding off discontent, be it a business person, Paisley, Party or Hitler, the worst thing is that they get away with it. The people who follow actually want to be led, rather than lead their own lives. Even Crass have to cope with this despite their break through - Crass armbands and T-Shirts sold by ripp-off merchants, kids buying them, rather than making their own, writing Crass on a wall rather than something more positive. Who's fooling who?

Friends,
I was delighted in reading what you had to say about the education system:how competitive and authoritian it is.

I am a teacher in a state school. Since I began teaching it has been an uphill slog. Limited as I am in the system I attempt to relate honestly and openly to the kids. Unfortunately the kids used to the strict control and punishment from other teachers, often abuse my different ways of teaching. The rest of the teachers are antagonistic towards me and see my methods contributing towards the lack of discipline in the school.

Some of these teachers describe themselves as lefties and even belong to political parties which advocate freedom and democracy in our society. They don't relate this to their work, however. They see their politics as fighting for higher wages, better promotional opportunities, better working conditions, shorter working day etc., the actual quality and content of teaching the children comes well down on their list. They expouse the virtues of comprehensive education but to me this is no real way forward in educating people. Most people see teachers as prime figures of authority, dislike them and dread going to schools. I have tried as far as possible to stick to my principles but can see the day when I will be either given the boot or leave due to frustration. School years are a crucial time in people realising their full potential. I shall stick at it!

Keep up the good work.

Minutes from the General Purposes & Finance Committee, Thursday 18th September. "The Town Clerk reported that at the meeting

in their magazine outline the various enviroment al struggles. NAMAZU is the Japanese word for catfish. A gaint catfish is said to sleep beneath

With Japanese imports and the microchip continually being the scapegoat for unemployment, we are told that the success of Japan has been

FEDERALISM IS THE COORDINATION OF AUTONOMOUS REGIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF

INVESTING DESTRUCTION

The latest "shock" unemployment figures are on the up and up — all the traditional and state jobs are disappearing fast. Except, of course, for the security "industry"...if enough money is offered plenty of mercenaries are flocking to join, eager to "learn how to sensibly kill"..

Another piece of rare investment in the North is a £1million expansion programme through the American-owned company Euroweld-owned by PX (Nuclear) Engineering of Boston. The money will be used to produce ancilliary equipment (pressure vessels) for the nuclear industry.
The "security industry" and the "nuclear industry" .... OUR ECONOMY wouldn't be quite the same without them, wouldn't it?

SLAVERY IS FREEDOM!!!!!

They caught Hercules the bear, so what! The bear whose name probably indicated the massive profits made from the so-called 'cereals' and toilet paper 'humanity' had defeated him into advertising, managed to escape while 'on location' in the Outer Hebrides. A great little item to add a light touch onto the news and lift peoples minds off the continual problems that effect them daily - but, at the same time the bear, like all other animals, institutions, the weather etc., must be seen to be controllable - otherwise the insecurity of elements being 'outta control' just might indicate a weak link in the present orders chain of infallability. The islanders had the right idea in rejecting the lure of £1000 reward and calling for the perpetual freedom of the bear — freedom from the humility and constraint of captivity and from advertising toilet paper - of course the mass media didn't mention much of this -it would have spoiled the fun!

URANIUM LIES IN DONEGAL

Following fast on the mining companies latest propaganda piece (a short (mis-titled) booklet 'Uranium Mining:the facts as IBM see it) comes the moves by the P.R. firm in charge of their dirty image to "get into the schools" They are currently doing recruitment talks. Much of their energy is being spent trying, unsucessfully, to undo the anti-uranium feeling in the area.

Meanwhile the local Co. Council, after months of hedging,have been forced to help finance an "independent" study into the impact to the area of mining and exploration. It seems likely that they will go along with the proposed research by Oxford based P.E.R.G., something the Donegal Uranium Committee have been raising funds for,for months. However those in the council who have large stakes on the mining co. Irish Base Metals, have as yet to make public their 'interests'. The sooner they are exposed the better!

ABORTION CONFERENCE

The Northern Ireland Abortion Campaign held its first conference on abortion, last weekend to which over fifty women attended. The morning session began with a lively talk from Madeleine Simms who has been campaigning for abortion law reform in Britain since the 1930s. She spoke of the struggle ot women in this century to obtain free safe legal abortion and once won, albeit limited, in the form of the 1967 Abortion Act, the continual defence of those rights. A member of the UPAA gave us an account of their work, referring women to England for charity clinic abortions and Leonora Lloyd from the National Abortión Campaign spoke on her organisation and its work since 1975.

For me, the best part of the conference was in the afternoon workshops. It soon became apparent in my own workshop on abortion and contraceptive methods that women were much more interested in discussing safe and healthy contraception (and was this possible when drug companies are making such huge profits out of us) and by all women knowing about their own bodies, their menstrual cycle and the side effects of the contraceptive they had chosen, and generally keeping fit and healthy.

The other workshops proved to be just as interesting: the link was made between poverty and abortion, the difficulties in finding the money for an abortion or facing parenthood alone and on supplementary benefits. The attitudes of the Chuch, particulary the Roman Catholic hierachy, the lack of sex education in schools and comparisons with other legislation on abortion particulary Italy, were discussed.

It was generally agreed that to go for parity with the rest of the UK by asking for the extension of the 67 Abortion Act was the very minimal demand we could make. Whilst we must fight for this in the short term it should be seen as an integral part of a campaign for a woman's right to choose free abortion on demand. Whilst we can learn from the experiences of the National Abortion Campaign in England, our own experience will not be the same, we are not defending the limited rights already won: we don't have those rights. Links with our sisters in the South and their Right to Choose Campaign have already been made, their situation, fighting a State with a powerful Church influence is very much the same as our own. It was felt that lobbying the twelve Westminster MPs (with the exception of Jim Kilfedder perhaps) was a waste of time but that we should not forget those MPs in England who have been sympathetic to Ireland on other issues.

However, as one woman said, laws could be taken away or just not implemented, and we should be concentrating on sharing our knowledge with other women. It was agreed that our primary task was to bring women together for meetings and more conferences to discuss abortion and to help lay the groundwork for a concerted province wide campaign for a woman's right to choose.

DEPRESSED!
DON'T BE CRACKING UP, SURE AREN'T WE SURROUNDED BY
FRIENDS!

OUR EMPLOYER would love us to work for him provided we don't ask for more money, or a share of the profits he's making through screwing us.

THE BANKER who will help us with a loan to tide us over provided we pay them back regularily plus of course the interest.

THE BUILDING SOCIETY will certainly give us a mortgage as long as we have a steady lifetime of toil and keep up the monthly installments plus the 20% interest.

THE CLERGY, always someone to confide in as long as we stick to the christian moral code of monogomous relationships, treating women as inferior with no say in the control of their own bodies, look at people who are gay as bad sick or sad etc., never worry about life now and look forward to the pie in the sky.

THE DOCTOR to preserve my body from ills so that I can continue producing at work. To make my mind feel happier when I'm depressed just as long as we keep taking the pills and don't take up too much of their time; who insists that its all my fault and not to blame the society we live in where it's normal to kill, imprison and torture people in the interests of preserving that society.

THE POLITICIANS who promises to solve all my problems if we put an X beside their names every so often.

THE POLICE who keep safe my few possessions and also my employers vast wealth and property just as long as I don't mind the side-effects of torture and wholesale repression and the creation of a police state.

THE ARMY to protect this wonderful welfare state; to ensure my freedom by removing my few remaining rights.

THE COURTS protecting me by imprisoning the thousands that break the law; to see that justice is not done and not seen to be done. More and more of their rules make it more and more difficult to conform.

TELEVISION which every night keeps me entertained and stops my mind from wondering, a passive consumer of their news and idelogies, a one-way communication in which I can never participate or challenge.

THE DOLE, who when I'm thrown on the scrap heap give me just enough money to stop me from starving in the streets or forcing me to expropriate to survive.

WHAT FRIENDS!

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mushrooms don't,given the correct identification and once they are pointed out to you,are hard to mistake. Finally the effects bear no resemblance to each other. Hallucinogenic mushrooms may not be the choice of everyone — but only if the information is available and accurate, can that choice be made. The DS tell lies.

SNIFFIN' AROUND

Mushrooms are freely available 10 weeks in every year: cheap home grown grass could be available all year round. Its not, because of hypocritical laws which allow ½ million alchololics to suffer for the sake of government taxes and the profits of the multi-nationals they serve, but bans other home-produced highs. So many teenage kids bored and poor, no jobs, dull city life, looking for kicks.....and sniffing of chemical substances in glue or whatever becomes the only available and cheap turn-on. Contrary to the shock-horror press (who claim to be keeping quiet on the issue, lest it could lead to its escalation) glue sniffin does not create a physical dependency— i.e. there are no withdrawal symtoms, though a psychological dependence is possible, depending on the individual. Prolonged use could damage the liver, the brain and mistakes can and are fatal but little research and no outcry is forthcoming from those areas where it does create permanent damage, through prolonged exposure by workers in industry. There's no campaigning here!! Much easier for the DS to play father-god spewing out their reactionary cliches to kids whose only purpose is to blot out the dull reality around them. And who is trying to change this reality? make it stimulating? to by-pass the need to blot out experience? Not the hypocrits or the religous freaks, who do no more than talk and threaten (they'd prosecute except its too impractical to make Evo-stick illegal!!) Sniffin glue is not a problem, its merely a by-product of a system which bans those substances which could be freely available and which do more good than harm! But that would challenge the existance of the drug squad and mess up the profits and taxes made from government controlled drugs!

on 21st August the Committee ahd decided to adhere to the decision on 19th June to install a bath and shower unit in the Lord Mayor's Suite at an estimated cost of £2000"

by its frequent stirrings are said to indicate heavenly displeasure with the authorities.

operative workforce. However the is resistance against the state, but of course we don't hear much about that. The NAMAZU Collectiv

TO BE MADE AT BASE AND DELEGATES TO PRESENT THESE TO DISCUSS. BUT THE BASE (STREET, VILLAGE, WORKPLACE) TO ULTIMATELY DECIDE. A DIS-UNITED IRELAND - IF YOU LIKE! ABC

continued from front page

have seen through the Diplock sham. How can the UDA now say the strike will lead to sectarian attacks. The strike is an extension of their own members protest.

And what have sectarian assassinations meant before. They have frightened many of the minority as was intended. But ultimately they have increased the resolve of those fighting repression. They have become more impatient of a section of the working class which sides with, and does the dirty work of, the bosses.

Finally, a stronger RUC and prison service (which will be the case if the strike fails) will more easily deal with housing protests, work occupations, and unemployment marches.

The loyalists will have to find alternatives for themselves where EVERYONE can have control of their own destinies.

PROTESTS IMMINENT

The hunger strike will be accompanied on the outside by street protests in an attempt to put pressure on the NI Office to accede to the prisoners five demands. It will be an awesome task given the failure of the protests so far, and the determination of the British Government to see its 'criminalisation' policy through. This article is an attempt to learn from previous protests and to support the need for new tactics if the imminent struggle is to succeed.

WHAT HAPPENED IN ARMAGH

Firstly to take the last protest in Armagh. Out of almost 300 people about 40 got to the prison walls to picket. The rest were stopped in the Shambles area of Armagh by a cordon. The organisers of the march, Sinn Fein, suggested that an attempt be made to walk through the cordon. Almost everyone was keen to try. But unlike a similar tactic in College Square earlier this year when everyone linked arms and after failing eventually sat down, this time some of us were able to get past (as opposed to through). One was a young girl from Ballymoney who was pounced on by the RUC and was dragged off.

These arrests should not have taken place. The young girl believed we could all get through. I think she was right. But behind the cordon further up the road was a squad of riot police and in the background the army. We were outnumbered and they had arms. If such an attempt is made, then it should be made clear to everyone that it is symbolic. To tackle the RUC where they are massed is playing into their arms. If we have to do it then it should be where we decide.

But given the situation in Armagh what could we have done. When the buses arrived at the cordon some women began to walk up a side street but were called back by the organisers. This idea was better than the set to. If groups had gone off in separate directions then some of us at least might have reached the gaol. And that was the purpose of the long journey many had made...to let the women inside hear the support from outside.

I might appear too critical, but it is important to prepare ourselves for the coming confrontations. And there will be. This was the first time a picket had been stopped from reaching the prison—except for a couple of months ago when the buses took a band along. Then the RUC said the band made it more of a demonstration than a picket and as such wasn't allowed. This time there was no band.

None of the Armagh pickets have caused violence. They usually consist of up to 200, last less than an hour and the buses are parked within 100 yards so there is no marching. Hardly a threat to peace.

Where they are dangerous is in their morale boosting for the women protesting prisoners who can usually hear them. That is bad news for the NI Office who are degrading and demoralising the prisoners in its attempt to defeat the protest. Recently they have begun to strip search every prisoner going and coming from a visit.

RUC ROLE

The stopping of the picket can also be seen in the context of the coming hunger strike and the increased role of the RUC. Most people imagine the NI Office will try and ride the wave of the strike. But it seems that, as well as intensify their propaganda efforts abroad to distance the reasons for the strike and to minimise the support for it, they will locally take action to stop, contain and smother any protest on the streets.

As the hunger strike will in many ways produce a high level of support available outside, the RUC and UDR will see this as a test of their own strength. If they lose their front line position to the army it will be a reflection on not just their capabilities but also on the new image of Northern Ireland. This is presented as a society, not with political disturbances, but one with a problem of simply 'law and order' and thus needing a strong local police force.

If the hunger strike fails, it will have repercussions on many other areas. Primarily the RUC will reestablish themselves and there will be a clamping down on deviant, 'subversive' activity that are now necessary just to stay alive and sane. They will begin to imprison all those who cannot pay their rent, or electricity, or people on the double, or taking part on unemployment marches, or picketing, or for being gay, or smoking a joint etc.

Also the prison system itself will be cock-a-hoop and any hope that other prisoners have of improving conditions such as cell space and education will have suffered a fatal blow. In N.I. most people know someone who has been in prison for one reason or another.

If the strike is defeated the British government may feel strong enough to impose an assembly of sorts here. With such reactionaries as Paisley top of the polls, any prospect of reform legislation on homosexuality and abortion may be dashed.

But surely the most important reason for supporting the hunger strike is the responsibility of us all to prevent a death in Long Kesh .... or if unable , then to make sure its not in vain.

TACTICS

During last summers hunger strike of Martin Meehan, local groups from many areas of the city conducted leafleting, postering, petitioning, held street meetings and blocked roads.

We could refine the postering and leafleting by each area 'adopting' a striker. Everyweek a new poster and leaflet would go out giving the details of the striker and the latest general developments If mass postering was done it would not only inform the local people what was happening but also impress upon the NIO the amount of support. It would create the atmosphere where, if other activity was going on, people would know WHY and not denounce these others as extremists or vandals.

While marching up and down the Falls Rd. is now a ritual, it still has advantages. It gives people who would not be involved otherwise, a chance to show support; it contradicts the lie of the British, Southern and Northern establishment medias which claims there is no such support; and it is less likely to be attacked by the RUC, the army, or sectarian gangs. But we should not rely on these marches too much as the British government knows that half the battle is to contain protests within West Belfast.

On the subject of the media, we should set up, and rely on our own resources. There are a couple of printing presses, several duplicators and a couple of regular papers already in existence. The establishment media, while being used should never be relied on -- even the Irish News which if a crunch came, would side with the Church and SDLP.

For that reason it is important to inform sections of the population in Scotland, Wales, England, North America, Europe etc. about what is going on and get their support. The idea of the mass postering should be suggested to groups in these countries. Groups in each city could again adopt a striker and poster many of the public buildings as well as hold public meetings, etc.

Ways will have to be devised to get information across to everybody, to get the support and sympathy from the general public and not just the catholic ghettos.

LOCAL GROUPS

In the event of local groups being set up, they should each send a delegate, or 2, to a weekly meeting where developments and tactics could be discussed. The strength of this structure would be the local groups which would be the instigators of activity. The delegates would coordinate this work eg. by suggesting that certain events happened on certain days for effect. The local groups would not be told what to do, but make up their own minds whether to cooperate or not. Different areas might have different circumstances But more important, they then can't be held back. At the Martin Meehan march in the New Lodge, Sinn Fein announced it was called off because Martin had come off his strike. Many people milled around for hours and some went home, but the feeling was so strong that the march went ahead anyway.

DONT GET CAUGHT

When public events are staged thousands of leaflets should be distributed at them. Spectacular leafleting, such as the dropping them from high buildings, would take the RUC unawares. The element of surprise is important because the state will be out to clamp down on any protest, and in our efforts we must not place ourselves in a position of being easily arrested. Get yourself a solicitor, so if you are arrested you know s/he will be phoning up and asking to speak to you. Get information on your rights — Just Books has just done a 'guide to your rights'.

SAS ON THE DOLE

In-mid September, two Sunday workmen came across two hooded SAS men in the Falls Rd dole office.....the SAS men bundled them off to Springfied Rd RUC station for interrogation, but their cover was blown. "Surveillance" they said. (...just down the road from their look-outs at the RVH).

This week, two top political republican campaigners were murdered, a third badly injured... in what looks like standard SAS dirty-work. A week later, the SAS bust up a H Block meeting chasing shadows. The RUC say they weren't involved,.....until six hours later when Whitehall instructions made them change their minds and clear the SAS blunder by claiming it a planned and co-ordinated exercise.

No way — theSAS have got the go -ahead to do what they want — and they want to murder a number of republican people in Belfast. And the top level Tories mastermind it all in London.

A few years back there was a direct link between SS files and the army computer, but this link was supposedly stopped following trade union pressure. The SAS men were most likely "by passing" the official army method of getting their hands on supposedly confidential files.....all that family/personal info is so very useful during their psycho-interrogation. Possibly the SAS had intended photographing the files...equally plausible would be the installing of a bugging device. Claimants beware!